



Fort Hancock Project

Gateway National Recreation Area is 26,000 acres of natural, historical and recreational space located in the heart of the New York metropolitan area. The park is administered as three units: Staten Island, Jamaica Bay and Sandy Hook. Sandy Hook is a six mile long barrier beach peninsula in Monmouth County at the northern tip of the New Jersey shore and the entrance to New York Harbor.

Fort Hancock is a National Historic Landmark consisting of some 100 buildings located at the tip of Sandy Hook.

Preserving Fort Hancock National Historic Landmark:

The National Park Service is committed to rehabilitating and adaptively reusing the historic buildings within Fort Hancock. This includes 100 buildings that would be managed as follows:

- a. 44 NPS park use buildings for operations, museums, etc.
- b. 19 park cooperator buildings for education, research and offices
- c. 37 historic lease buildings for education, research, office and hospitality

Fort Hancock Historic Leasing Project

Since the park was established in 1974, the NPS has struggled to preserve the 263 National Landmark Structures on Sandy Hook, 100 of which are usable buildings within Fort Hancock. A plan to rehabilitate and adaptively use 100 Fort Hancock buildings as a Gateway Village for education, the arts, recreation and hospitality was developed as early as 1979. By 1990 it became clear that the NPS would never get the tax dollars necessary to preserve the Fort Hancock complex. It was then that the plan to use a public/private partnership to achieve the vision was adopted.

Since the late 1990s the park has engaged the public in the decision making process through meetings and workshops. Presentations were made regarding issues such as future use, parking and preservation of the buildings. In August 1999 a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued for the adaptive use of some of the fort's vacant buildings. Public comment was solicited on the concepts and continued through five open houses, three public meetings. A five month period of solicited public comments followed these events. All important plans and documents related to the project are posted on the web at www.nps.gov/gate.

The effort to save historic Fort Hancock took a step forward on July 9, 2004, when NPS Northeast Regional Director Marie Rust signed a long term lease for the rehabilitation and adaptive use of 36 of the fort's 100 buildings. These buildings, (largely unused for twenty- five years), have been leased to Sandy Hook Partners LLC. for mixed education, office and hospitality use. Sandy Hook Partners intends to complete rehabilitation of all 36 buildings (including 16 officers row houses, enlisted men's barracks and mess halls, the YMCA and gymnasium, post auditorium and theater, mule barn and the officers' club) in three phases over the next five years.

Twenty park cooperator buildings are currently occupied by a mix of federal, state and local partners including MAST High School, the NJ Marine Sciences Consortium, Brookdale Community College, NOAA, National Marine Fisheries, the NJ Audubon Society and the American Littoral Society. The addition of the Sandy Hook Partners investment will mean improved services such as high speed internet connections, upgraded utilities and natural gas service. The Sandy Hook Coast Guard Station will also benefit from these improvements. The NPS will also retain use of 44 buildings now used in park operations, public museums or housing at the fort. All funds generated by the lease will stay at Sandy Hook and will be used to enhance the environment and serve the public.